



Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 23, 2004
Wisconsin Rapids City Council Chambers
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

LRSC Members Present

Wisconsin Counties Association:

Dan Fedderly
Dick Leffler
Emmer Shields

Wisconsin Towns Association:

Marilyn Bhend
Gene Lueck
Marv Samson

**Regional Planning Commissions/
Metro Planning Organizations:**

Don Kush
Walt Raith

League of Wisconsin Municipalities:

Bill Beil, Jr.
Bill Handlos
Dennis Melvin
Dave Waffle

WisDOT Staff Present:

Scott Bush
Rod Clark
Steve Coons
Doug Dalton
Michael Erickson
Mary Forlenza
Joe Nestler
Susie Forde
Randy Romanski

Wisconsin Alliance of Cities:

Rick Jones
Paula Vandehey

Others Present:

Mike Hess
Todd Pierce (WI-TDA)
Steve Pudloski (UW-TIC)
Judy Ziewacz (WI - DATCP)

LRSC Members Excused:

Dave Botts
Jeff Mantes
Ron Rutkowski
Ken Yunker
Arlyn Helm

Opening Business (Don Kush, Mary Forlenza)

The meeting was called to order shortly after 9 a.m.

Review & Approval of May 27th & July 22nd minutes

Minutes from May 27 & July 22, 2004 were reviewed and accepted as written.

LRSC Status – Focus Areas, Biennial Report Highlights (Don Kush, Committee Chairs)

Council & Committee Structure: Mary Forlenza gave a brief overview and highlights. The LRSC has seen more turn over in the past two years, but along with the loss of some great members have been fantastic new faces with many fresh ideas and lots of energy. The current five-committee structure has served the council well (Executive, Education & Communication, Infrastructure Management, Local Transportation Funding and Regulatory-Environmental and Legislative), and will continue in their current roles and duties.

Don Kush then spotlighted the focus areas and individual products coming from work developed by the separate committees during this biennium.

Regulatory, Environmental and Legislative Committee (REAL): Environmental Streamlining

This process began with the *Transportation & the Environment – Promoting & Protecting the Public Interest* workshop in 2003, which brought WisDOT, DNR and other groups together to develop a new approach for the delivery of local transportation projects while promoting environmental conservation and protecting environmental resources.

Key recommendations include:

- Single Point of Contact for Locals with the DNR on local road projects.
- Creation of an oversight committee and group to work with conflicts and problems when disagreements occur between the DNR and locals on road projects. A ‘Local Transportation’ Advisory Council to the DNR.
- Continued efforts on Education, Outreach and Training.

A budget proposal has been developed to implement these recommendations, and is supported by the Governor, WisDOT, and DNR. They have been formalized and submitted into the current biennial budget process and the LRSC will be awaiting the outcome of that process.

Current and future topics include; over-weight truck issues, archaeological issues, and wetland issues.

Education & Communication Committee (E&C): Key Products

Many of the products that are attributed to the E&C committee are developed with staff support from WisDOT. These products include:

- LRSC website on the WisDOT website under *Programs for Local Governments*, clearly marked with Council logo. Includes the council’s history, charge and priorities, membership and other key information.
- Current LRSC schedules, maps and agendas, and LRSC minutes.

- Electronic LRSC Quarterly Newsletter, as well as past biennial reports. The Newsletter provides timely articles of interest regarding the local roads system.
- LRSC Brochure (updated in 2004).
- GTA Brochure (to be completed by end of 2004).

The E&C committee also tracks activity on the WisDOT website concerning the many programs offered to local governments by WisDOT. Since tracking this activity, there has been a steady increase in the amount of “hits” to these programs and information offered by the WisDOT website.

Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR): Ongoing Commitment & Support

The concept of WISLR was a recommendation from the LRSC. It began as a realization that an evaluation of local road funding could not be done without additional information beyond what was being provided by the antiquated Local Roads Database (LRDB). From these initial concepts and input by the LRSC, with a lot of hard work by WisDOT was the creation of WISLR (August 2002). WISLR will allow WisDOT and locals to better assess pavement rating information, and work to set priorities for the future. It will provide a more effective way to collect and certify local road mileage (for GTA payments) and attribute information.

Pavement ratings for both 2001 and 2003 have been compiled in WISLR. Local communities have complied with these requests, and as we move to automate the system and improve the processes it is hoped that compliance will increase. Compliance is an amazing 90% even though the requirements carry no penalty for non-compliance. The next phase in WISLR development will be moving from a data management tool to a more robust system that will offer these abilities:

- Information on budgeting, developing cost scenarios based on different assumptions and criteria.
- Use WISLR not just for Pavement ratings and to help develop GTA payments, but to help develop pavement management plans, and build it up to a pavement management system.
- Use information and analysis abilities to create “Best Management Practices” for local governments.

Training, continued educational and outreach efforts by both WisDOT and the LRSC will provide even more exposure in the future. It is a testament to the strong local commitment to this effort, and its potential for immediate and long-term benefits that WISLR will be an asset to local governments in the future, not just a data management program.

Local Transportation Finance Committee: Rick Jones presented a Draft Resolution (Handout): *Supporting the Integration of Pavement Ratings Into the Development of a Pavement Management Strategy For the (City/Village/Town/County) of -----*. This was created by the committee and offered to the assorted associations to gain support for the continuing efforts to draw importance to WISLR and its future abilities once it is fully utilized. This draft resolution was contemplated for the 2007 pavement rating cycle and requires nothing more from these local communities than what they are currently providing to WisDOT. The resolution can help locals begin the discussion on what level of service they

want for their community. Dave Waffle expressed concern that better terminology definitions are necessary.

The LRSC is also working on mechanisms to achieve regulatory compliance on the pavement rating requirements. One such mechanism is the development of an incentives program to local governments. The incentive concept in its rudimentary form would offer a one or one and one-half percent increase to the GTA funding to a local government if they provided the asset management information in a timely manner and/or in an automated format. Funding for this would come from inflationary increases in GTA funding, not from current program levels. The Finance Committee is developing an issue paper that will be distributed to the local associations concerning this potential incentive program.

PASERWARE 3.0: New and improved and interactive with WISLR

WISLR has revolutionized the look and structure of PASERWARE and is responsible for many of the improvements to this release. PASERWARE 3.0 was developed in response for the need of these two programs to work together seamlessly. PASERWARE 3.0 will be another mechanism for improvement to the pavement rating submittals by local communities and help in our ongoing automation activities.

Once fully distributed to all local governments and in use, there should be an increase in electronic fillings and lower the problems attributed to bad data and incomplete records. Training on PASERWARE 3.0 will be conducted in November and December of this year and will be ongoing there after through e-learning courses offered by the UW – Transportation Information Center (UW-TIC). Look for dates and locations for these courses in the LRSC Quarterly Newsletters and in brochures sent directly to local governments by UW-TIC.

WisDOT Support for LRSC: Looking to the future

This partnership provides an avenue to local government association officials to meet with the Secretary's office twice a year, and with other WisDOT officials as necessary. The Bureau of Transit and Local Roads provides staffing assistance and coordinates activities for the council and its committees. The Council meets regularly with leadership from the Division of Transportation Investment Management.

The current fiscal conditions in State government could impact administrative and management elements of this relationship. The Secretary of Transportation and his office have committed their ongoing support for adequate staffing of Council activities.

LRSC current Coordination/Outreach Activities:

- Trans 233
- Community Sensitive Design
- Utilities and Rights-of-way
- Connections 2030 – WisDOT Long Range Transportation Plan.
- Oversize/overweight Trucks.

Recent LRSC Projects of Relevance:

- SCOLPS
- LRSC Model – Presentation made to the Kettl Commission and other state officials
- TRB presentation concerning LRSC
- FHWA presentation.

Future LRSC Activities:

- GTA Incentive Proposal and continued work on Local Road and Street Funding.
- WISLR & PASERWARE 3.0 – Using these tools to move from pavement ratings to pavement management through the use of best management practices.
- Continuing to Communicate & Educate Locals about best management practices.
- Provide information on council activities and products.

Connections 2030 & the Local Roads Element – Handout (Mark Wolfgram, WisDOT)

Mark reminded the LRSC of current resource constraints placed on WisDOT, and recognized the same challenges for local governments. He reiterated that a local roads element would be included in Connections 2030.

WisDOT is still going to pursue the Corridor approach that was outlined by Sandy Beaupre at the May meeting, but will include analysis and information concerning the local roads that connect and feed these corridors. WISLR data will be used and is important to the forecasting process needed to complete the plan. Much of the data gathering and information is nearly complete. What is not been agreed upon are concepts of thresholds concerning congestion (What is it? And how much?), and what is a proper level of service given a pavement type or structure?

Mark explained that both internal work teams developed within WisDOT, and external teams (LRSC + other affected shareholder groups) will be consulted to develop these agreed upon thresholds. When Mark specifically asked who would want to participate in this process, and how would you like to proceed in the future, the council decided that the Infrastructure Management committee would represent the LRSC, with additional staff and support as requested. The current schedule for this work to take place is fall of 2004 to spring of 2005.

After these meetings take place and information is compiled, some agreement on these criteria can then be used to answer these important questions:

- What are the thresholds of need?
- What is the appropriate response to these needs?
- What should it cost?

From there, WisDOT can begin to evaluate the policy and program implications. It will be from these decisions that future budgeting and policy will be derived for both the corridor network and the local systems that connect to these corridors. This will be the foundation of Connections 2030.

From there, an unscheduled discussion took place centered on WisDOT cutting traffic counts for local roads conducted by the state. This is an administrative decision due to lack of resources to perform these traffic counts. Many members of the LRSC voiced concern about this action. Traffic data is very important and used for many purposes including, budgeting, maintenance, safety, and expansion. Susie Forde informed the LRSC that “special” counts would not be eliminated, and the Districts would still have some control over counting or not counting when working with local governments.

Bill Handlos reminded WisDOT that largest cities in the state already have the ability or already do their own traffic counts. Many smaller communities (towns, villages) rely on the state for this service. Many wondered if proper notification has occurred concerning the changing of the traffic counting cycle and reduction of counts to local governments? Bill also

reminded the council that pavement standards are based on traffic counts (average daily traffic – ADT) and without regular counts, it will be harder to properly make decisions on maintenance and expansions that occur on the local road network. Mark felt this was an important topic that should be discussed at the next Council meeting, and along with the on-going Connections 2030 process.

WISLR Statewide Pavement Analysis Tools Demonstration – Handout (Joe Nestler, WisDOT)

IT IS FINALLY AVAILABLE! After nearly 5 years, WISLR pavement analysis tools are ready for local governments to use. Those wishing to view this information will need to contact WISLR personnel for this special privileges and a different tier of security clearance. Joe stressed the importance of understanding the DATA.

The 2004 Statewide Local Road Needs Analysis Estimates are based on average data, not specific real world examinations concerning actual pavement examinations. These pavement needs do not take into account safety (geometrics), capacity, and standards compliance costs are not included. The basis for pavement data is the PASER ratings. Need estimates provided represent an unconstrained budget scenario.

Joe emphasized that these estimates can be used for credible planning - level estimates, but rudimentary data does not support detailed or project level estimates or accuracy. These needs are fixed needs in today's dollar amounts and do not have historical perspective or take capital vs. maintenance decisions into account.

Next, Joe gave an overview of the preliminary statewide results. Once again he warned that the numbers are based on averages (a range of costs), and not specific data or analysis of individual locations. This information will be finalized and released in the coming months to those using the WISLR program.

Many members of the council are concerned about the use of this data. Will it be used to punish those who have lower pavement ratings or higher needs? Once again it was stressed that was not the intent of its usage. It should be used to help give local leaders and policy maker's information to make better decisions concerning their transportation networks. This is not to say that it couldn't be used for alternative motives, but that is not the intent of WisDOT or the WISLR representatives. Our main goal is for this information to lead to best practices policies by locals and there spending on their systems, and to point to deficiencies where deficiencies exist.

To help create better information in the future, the LRSC should begin an examination into what local governments are spending on their roads. The last update to the DOR forms used to report this spending was in 1990/91. We may need to revisit that form and make needed adjustments to help explain specific spending amounts by locals on there systems, or look to a new mechanism to develop this information and have it available for future decision making.

Local Perspective on the Impacts of Agriculture Vehicles on Wisconsin's Local Roads System (Randy Romanski, WisDOT and Judy Ziewacz, DATCP)

DATCP Executive Assistant Judy Ziewacz introduced herself to the council, and brought the group up to date on DATCP's recent activities. One of the main problems in Wisconsin is the fact that farms are getting larger, and because of this are producing greater amounts of animal waste (manure).

Some of the options currently being examined to help alleviate problems with over-weight trucks on the local system include:

- Bio-engineering solutions using manure digesters not only solve some of the problems attributed to the large amounts of waste, but can provide electricity as a by product. The major hurdle to the use of digesters is cost (\$500K to \$1M), and the amount of manure it takes to make them feasible to an agricultural operation. A minimum operation would need 500 + cows to provide enough manure to make it cost effective.
- DATCP is looking into using Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) grants to assist in purchasing equipment and federal subsidies that may offset some of the cost to power companies that may feel these systems are cost prohibitive.
- Drying manure before it is transported (to lighten loads and prevent damage to the local road network).
- Piping manure away from the facility to a loading site on a larger road, or to a treatment plant that would process the manure.

As REAL committee chair, Emmer Shields outlined the council's concerns. For example, wide use of emergency orders permitting over-weight trucking on regular intervals. Loggers get seasonal exceptions in the spring, and agriculture gets them in the fall. The problem never gets addressed. The Wisconsin County Highway Association (WCHA) would try to work with agricultural businesses to identify local routes. These designated routes could become a route system for moving manure from farms to fields – statewide; a planning effort could be made to identify these routes. Future improvement efforts could be identified with the understanding that these routes exist and what kind and type of pavement is needed to support these loads. Everyone agreed that this is something that should be studied and considered in the future.

Second, licensing and fines will not solve the problem due to lax enforcement. It really centers on a technical solution concerning the equipment being used. To solve the problem, trucks need to be equipped with more axles to carry heavier loads safely on the system. This needs to be self-regulating, and not need enforcement. The council is looking for long-term solutions to this issue not a quick fix.

Third, another way to enforce these larger operations is to require a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) before they are developed and then charge a special assessment or fee to improve the transportation system surrounding the development. It is required for commercial development; it should also be required for large agricultural developments. The council will study these and other solutions as it generates a proposal for consideration by policy makers.

WISLR Training Demo – Handout (Susie Forde, WisDOT)

Susie handed out training CD's to all council members, and demonstrated the procedure to load the program on a computer. The Computer Based Training (CBT) modules covered by this CD are:

- On/AT Instructions.
- How to Log in and Navigate in WISLR.

More modules will follow as WISLR staff develops them, or when new procedures or products are developed. This interactive training provides opportunities to quiz yourself on understanding of the materials, and directs you to the table of contents to provide more information when answers are incorrect or you don't understand the materials. WISLR staff will be introducing the CBTs throughout the state in the coming months. Training sessions will be offered and this information will be provided once it becomes available.

Susie provided council members who received the CD's an evaluation form, and asked participants to fill it out and return it to WisDOT in order to evaluate the CBT session and improve any problems or address areas that need explaining or more information.

PASERWARE 3.0 Demonstration – Handout (Steve Pudloski, UW – TIC)

IT IS FINALLY AVAILABLE! 3.0 is designed to look similar to PASERWARE 2.5m keeping it simple and easy use, particularly for current users. A major improvement matches the WISLR program format to allow for uploads/downloads of information between the two programs. Also like WISLR, the ON/AT format must be used when added or updating road files. It will also allow for the transfer of these files for the required pavement rating submittals. Some of the benefits of this new version of PASERWARE allow the user to:

- Inventory roads and pavement conditions.
- Keep maintenance history.
- Prioritize road maintenance needs.
- Estimate future project costs.
- Evaluate impacts of alternate budgets, maintenance strategies, and projects.
- Develop a long-range plan.
- Communicate needs and consequences of policy decisions more effectively, and
- MOST IMPORTANT: Submit pavement ratings to WisDOT!

This information is supplemented by the ability to use charts and graphs to help provide additional clarification concerning budget levels, pavement ratings, and alternative analysis scenarios. The data is maintained in an ACCESS format, and provides a tabular file of every pavement segment, including the physical attributes of a segment (if data is available and put into the system).

Once a community begins using PASERWARE 3.0 and has uploaded its current WISLR data for usage, the WISLR road segment length or name cannot be changed without going through the proper process. Even though it could be changed manually in your system, it will not register in WISLR without going through the proper procedures and having it recognized by WisDOT as being changed when it is submitted.

Initial training will be offered during the months of November & December 2004. A brochure will be mailed to all local governments informing them of these training sessions and locations.

Training topics include:

- Review of ON/AT and confusing data.
- Focus on how the data appears. What does the rating system mean?
- Overview of PASER rating system, road importance, and prioritization methods.
- Demo of how PASERWARE 3.0 helps identify consequences of budget and project selection decisions, and how to communicate those to elected officials and the public.
- Demo on how to install, download/upload data, use the features, develop your own costs, and submit reports.

Other training will also occur in spring (February, March and Early April 2005), with additional sessions in late summer and early fall. Information will be provided as training is available.

Closing Business

Agenda topics for December 2nd Council Meeting:

- Tracey Mckenney (FHWA) – Review of Local Programs in Wisconsin.
- Mark Wolfgram/Susie Forde (WisDOT) – Traffic Count Issue.
- Draft Biennial Report
- 2007 – 2009 STP Urban/Rural – Local Bridge Program & Automation.
- Draft GTA Brochure.

NOTE: Local Transportation Funding Committee will be meeting December 2nd following the regular LRSC meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 pm